

INTEGRAL Yoga

Contents

LETTERS

Letters to Sri Swamiji and his disciples sharing student's experiences in Yoga.....2

YOGA AND YOUTH

Why young people turn to Yoga, by Sri Swami Satchidananda.....3

YOGA AND MEDICINE

Why and how of fasting and natural diet
by Swami Amritananda Ma, M.D.....7

YOGA AND THE SCHOOLS

Applying Yogic practices in education, by Ram Gary Rick.....10

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

A disciple's experience of the inner meaning of Yoga
by Sudharshan Anderson.....12

THE EGO

How to recognize and overcome the No. 1 enemy of spiritual life, by Sri Swami Sivananda.....15

THE MOTHER IS THE BABY'S FIRST GURU

An excerpt from a new book on pregnancy and infant care in the context of Yogic life, by Sri Swami Satchidananda.....16

NEWS OF SWAMIJI

His Hong Kong visit in his own words;
his pilgrimage to India and Ceylon with 35 students.....18

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INTEGRAL YOGA: A magazine of the Integral Yoga Institutes. Vol. VII, No. 2; June 1976

by Satchidananda Ashram-Yogaville 1976

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Published by Office of Sri Gurudev (OSG), International Headquarters of the Integral Yoga Institutes, at Satchidananda Ashram-Yogaville, Box 108, Pomfret Center, Connecticut 06259,

U.S.A.



Letters

This letter comes from a major figure in the Jain religion who, like Sri Swamiji, is dedicated to bringing together all religions.

My Divine Soul Swami Satchidanandaji Maharaj,

Today I was very pleased to receive your beautiful card. After reading it I was filled with such inspiration.

You are doing such noble work. I believe that saints are pillars of world peace and religious brotherhood. Your spreading of Integral Yoga is of universal benefit to this era.

Your hospitality and divine love were very much appreciated by us. I only hope that we will talk together, work together, live together and love together.

With Divine Love,
Muni Sushil Kumar, Chairman
World Federation of Religions
New York, N.Y.

The following letter came after an interview which Swamiji had on February 28th of this year.

Dearest Swamiji,

I want to thank you for the gracious sharing with me last night over the radio--not only for the interview; that was important, but ultimately transient. What was not transient were the seeds of love sown in my consciousness from the con-

tact with such a beautiful soul as yours.

As I mentioned at the close of the show, I've seen and loved you from a distance before, but now I love you closely. From a distance you are a teacher, and yes, a wonderful one, but closely you are a human being too. And when I see you as a teacher and a human being, I can say, "This I am; this I can do."

I feel your love, and the essence of our meeting covers me as a most warm comfortable blanket covers a child. God bless you

Love and Light,
Jacob Blass, KCSB Radio
Santa Barbara, Calif.

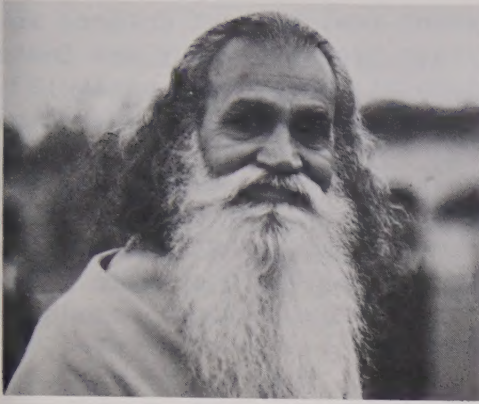
After a recent visit to our medical clinic, we received the following letter.

Dear Dr. Amritananda,

We just want to tell you how impressed we were by the Satchidananda Clinic in Putnam. There was a depth of knowledge that was reassuring, including a strong emphasis on proper nutrition, an area where many clinics are quite weak. We couldn't help but feel confidence in you.

All in all, it looks like a small revolution is taking place in Connecticut. We look forward to seeing you all again.

A. and B. M.
Columbus, Ohio
(Continued on Page 18)



Yoga and Youth

This talk was given in response to a concerned parent's question as to why, although she had provided her children with material things, religious training and love, they were unhappy and sought another life through drugs and different religious cultures.

Yes, it's a fact. We give a lot of love and a lot of material things. But we don't seem to give them the proper understanding which they want. Why should they go after drugs and other religious beliefs if they could find what they need at home?

What is the purpose of their getting into drugs? Probably they thought that in drugs they could find peace and tranquillity. Their reason for getting into drugs was genuine. They wanted tranquillity. They say, "I want to get high." What does it mean? High means tranquillity.

And they look into other religious beliefs because they don't seem to get this tranquillity in their own religion. I'm sorry to say that. I'm not blaming the

particular religion. It's not the mistake of their religion. But it is the mistake of the so-called religious teachers.

Religious Hypocrisy

What do we see in the world? Constant fight between religions. Different religions and different denominations have the same prophet, the same holy book, yet they fight with each other. So the children are puzzled. "What is this? They talk about God; they say holy things; but they fight. If their talking of religion and God is going to end up in fighting, we don't want that anymore." Can you blame them? The world's statistics say that more lives are destroyed in the name of religion and God than in all the political wars.

And even as parents, do we set an example? We follow a religion, Christian or Jewish or whatever it is. We go to church or synagogue, pray, come back, but in front of their very eyes we do wrong things against the teachings. We exploit people, we don't treat everybody equally.

We divide people in the name of race, religion, color, community and caste.

Do you think your children are fools? They watch you. "Dad, Mom, if that is what you do in the name of religion, why do you want me to follow you to the church or synagogue?" They're not hypocrites. I appreciate them. They are frank in their feelings.

And as the age progresses, the younger generation becomes more intelligent. Even the little kids of 6 or 7 ask you all kinds of deep questions. It's the age of the brain, not the heart. The heart is there, but the intelligence dominates. In those days, you could simply say, "The Holy Book says don't do that." Or "The minister says don't do this." Or "Your father says don't do that." But today, even if you say, "God says this," they'll question, "Who is that God? Let him come and convince me." You have to convince them because of the intelligence. We live in that age.

Instant Samadhi

Naturally, when that conviction is not there, they try all sorts of things. But, as usual to the age, they want everything fast. They don't want to wait. Somehow in the West we see that. Everything must be fast--fast communications, fast travel, fast cooking, fast eating. Put it in an ultrasonic oven--in one second, everything is cooked. You don't even want to take time to cook gently, putting on fire wood, one by one. That's all gone now. Everything fast: in-

stant tea, instant coffee, instant breakfast. Why not instant Samadhi (God consciousness)?

Naturally, that's what they want. So whichever way can bring that instant tranquillity, they want to try. Unfortunately, there came across a few instant preachers who said, "Just take this cube and get instant Samadhi." And they innocently wanted to try that. They didn't know it would disturb them. Luckily, many of the intelligent people found it was not going to be lasting and genuine and dropped it--not because the government passed some law, no. No law can stop them without their conviction. If you could make people good by law alone, the world would have become a heaven long ago.

It is at that point they say, "Let us try something from the East." They just try it. Not that we come here to convert anybody; not at all. We don't need to do that. And what is it they are trying in the name of Eastern religions? Nothing new. The same stuff, presented in a little different way to suit their conviction; that's all. We convince them, not just ask them to follow blindly.

To give you an example, take smoking. Many, many people are now staying away from cigarettes. I never said to anybody, "Stop smoking; stop eating meat; stop doing this and that." All I told them was how it would affect them. "If you want a clean life, pure lungs, don't saturate them with nicotine." I gave all the reasons. That's all. "If you are convinced, fine; you decide

that to do."

And again, another example. A few years back, many of the youngsters didn't believe in marriage or in living with just one person. They just wanted to date different people every day. Now many are getting convinced that this is not the proper life. They said, "Oh, I have to live with somebody and try it out." I told them, "In what way do you want to try? Sure, I admit you can't just go and give your hand to somebody without even knowing him or her. Know the person. But knowing is in the heart and mind."

Marriage is giving yourself to another person. It is almost like signing an agreement. Until then, wait. Know him or her, know what the quality is, what the character is, whether he or she is running after you for your pocket or your beauty or for your qualities. Analyze everything. And if you are satisfied, then say, "Sir, I am happy with you. You are the right person for me. Here I am, giving myself to you." That is what you call a true matrimonial life.

So we should have a little control. Otherwise, it is not really that you are trying to know the person. That is just an excuse. You are itching to satisfy your senses. And that creates a lot of problems. So I am just saying these things and many people accept it.

Canon Law

I've gone one step further. Many priests who wanted to run away from their professions as religious ministers because they were not allowed to marry,

came to me. I spoke to them. Many of them got convinced and went back to live in the Church. I explained to them that if their interest is to serve humanity without dividing their life into personal and public life, they should be 100% free from any personal responsibilities. "That is the reason you are asked not to marry--not that you are forced. So if you are interested in this life, don't marry. But if you think, 'No, I don't want to give my entire life for such public service; I want to give just a part of it,' fine, have a married life. There's nothing wrong in it. But if your interest is to serve everybody at all times, then don't have anything of your own. It is for that reason we ask the monks to be single."

Many said, "We never heard this kind of explanation before. All we hear is, 'The Vatican says so.'" That's why, even in the Vatican, I said, "You people don't convince them. You simply say, 'Come on, this is the order. If you don't do it, we'll fire a "canon" at you!'"

In Yoga we don't have a canon law. We state the facts. "If you like it, take it. If you don't like it, if you are not ready, try the other way."

The Eastern Way

That is the Eastern way, I might say. But don't think that all Eastern people are like that. If you go to India or Ceylon, they have problems there also. They also fight in the name of religion. "Only Siva--if you say 'Vishnu' you will go to hell."

So every house has a back door, remember that. Don't think that everybody there is a saint or a Yogi. People are people everywhere: good and bad, evolved and not so evolved. And everywhere there are beautiful people, people with cosmic universal love. Take for example, Martin Luther King. He gave his life for a principle. And Mahatma Gandhi also. So don't worry about where they come from. It is the principle.

Come and See

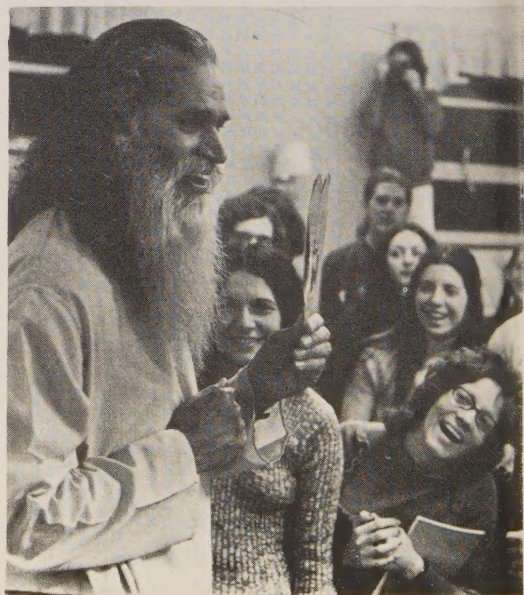
So the modern children are interested. That's why we see so many hundreds and thousands of them in Yoga. And what are we doing? We are making them better people. Many of the parents who didn't like the children coming to Yoga centers, who even criticized them, when they saw the beautiful changes, have themselves become interested in Yoga.

We are interested in serving everyone, not just from any particular religion or group. How many dropouts went back to the colleges to study because I convinced them? Many of my students are learning to do so many different things--becoming doctors, chiropractors and so on. We want to serve people and we want all the talents.

So if the children come to Eastern thinking or Yoga, please don't get disturbed. They are going to be wonderful people. You'll be proud of them. Only it takes a little time. If you want to know how they are getting on, come and see what's happening.

Many times we hear from parents, "I don't want to know what Yoga is; I don't know why he or she is doing that." It means, without even knowing what it is, you judge it. You are simply attached to certain ways of thinking and you don't want to open your mind.

In every other respect we have opened ourselves. We eat all kinds of food from different countries. We like Chinese food, Japanese food, Indian curry. We like Indian dress, African dress. If I pick just one person from head to foot, we will see a combination of all the different countries. The hat is from one country, wristwatch from Switzerland, belt from Japan. We are a mixture of everything. So it's high time to forget all the differences. Whatever is nice, take it and use it. It doesn't belong to one individual community or group or country. It's all universal--it's God's gift.



Yoga and Medicine

Sandra McLanahan M.D.
(Swami Amritananda Ma)

Fasting and Diet

Question: I would like to know more about fasting. When fasting, how does the body get the necessary proteins and vitamins, etc. How should I ease into fasting? When I am not fasting, what is the best diet to be on?

Perhaps the reason fasting originally got its name was because it was found to help make you healthy "fast." Indeed, fasting is a very useful natural technique for relieving many bodily problems. But fasting must be approached cautiously. Know that fasting works best gradually and doesn't do well with sudden changes.

One way in which fasting benefits us is by giving the body a chance to rest from expending energy to digest and assimilate food. The stomach, intestines and all the digestive organs have time to repair themselves and rest from active duty. In

addition, the body is able to send more of its blood supply to weak areas of the body to catch up on left-over work.

When the stomach and intestines are filled with food, a great proportion of the blood supply must go there. That's why if you run, after eating (drawing blood to arms and legs), you may feel slightly sick. Or if you try to meditate on a full stomach, you feel drowsy because, again, you are asking the body to put its blood supply and energy in two places at once.

Animals naturally fast when they are sick--in fact, you cannot make them eat anything. This allows the body to correct problems by concentrating on eliminating toxic substances rather than digesting. Almost every disease is helped by fasting--arthritis, high blood pressure, etc.

Cleaning House

Of course, we do need raw materials for our bodies to func-

tion well. Probably if we always ate the right food in the right amounts there would be no need to fast. But unfortunately, by our bad habits, we eat toxic things (refined and synthetic foods, chemical sprays) or eat too much, both of which create toxic conditions within the digestive tract. These toxic products accumulate in our livers and fat storage areas. In order to regain our health we must fast to eliminate these accumulations.

What takes place physiologically is that as fewer nutrients come in, the body must rely on its stored supplies. As it uses them up, deposited waste products are eliminated and balance is restored to the body.

You can verify this yourself. As the deposits are disturbed and the body is "cleaning house," the tongue may become coated, the mouth cloggy and a bad smell develop. All this comes from within as the elimination process continues. But as the fast progresses, the tongue coating will disappear, the eyesight will become clearer and the saliva will actually taste sweet. You will feel very alert. This alertness is probably why so many religions associate holy days with fasting.

How to Fast

One fast day a week is an excellent regular practice for health. On this day take only juices--one kind of your preference (orange is good). Don't use canned juice; when possible take fresh, or if not, frozen. If you are having a very quiet day, you

may take only water. In the beginning, if you feel very weak, take some solid fruit (fruit fasting).

Once you are used to this, you may try three-day fasts or go as long as two weeks twice a year with great benefit, but judge according to how you *feel*, not by any pre-set rules. When the tongue clears and the saliva is sweet the fast is long enough. For long fasts, a mixture of juices is beneficial: to one gallon water, add two cups orange, one cup prune and one cup papaya juice. This mixture of dilute juices is very gentle on digestion and aids fasting.

Most important, *take as many days to break a fast as you have fasted*. During a fast the stomach and intestines become smaller, so you can't go right back to eating the same foods as before. A good approach is: begin the fast on juice (make sure the last few meals before fasting are light). Take an enema each day you fast, because the body's normal reflexes of elimination are not in effect. Come off the fast by first taking juicy fruits like oranges or grapes or by taking yogurt and finely chopped cucumber. Next add easily digestible items like cream of wheat, applesauce and plain steamed vegetables until you have equalled the number of days of the fast.

The Best Diet

Once you return to a regular diet, what is the best way to eat? The very best is to eat foods as close as possible to the way they come in nature. At

least 50% of the diet should be raw because vital nutrients are destroyed by cooking. Raw salads, fruits, nuts, sunflower and sesame seeds and yogurt or cottage cheese form the basis of the diet. These foods build a perfect body, if taken in the right quantity. To know the right quantity, develop the alertness to eat only when you are really hungry--not because it is a certain time of day. Ask the stomach, "Did you empty yourself fully of the last meal?"

Most of all, moderation is important. The ancient South Indian scripture, Tirukkural, says, "No medicine is necessary for him who eats after assuring himself that what he has already eaten is digested." Overeating any food produces mucus. The real mucusless diet is simply not overeating any food.

Try to eat only one main meal per day, the other two very light. Eat the main meal at noon so it is fully digested before bed. Train yourself to be conscious while eating of how your stomach is reacting. Stop when it is 3/4 full. If possible, sit in Vajrasana (see below) while eating, and for ten minutes afterward.

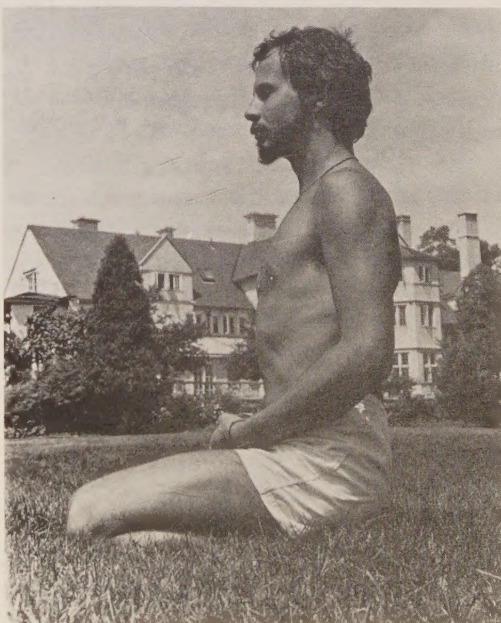
Just as we should not overeat, neither should we take the other extreme and fast to excess. You can judge for yourself how much you need to fast. Start with one day a week. If needed, try a longer one later. Return to taking food with an attitude that food is medicine for the body, not only sensory pleasure for the tongue. In this way, you will avoid getting caught in overeat-

ing and remain in a light state. You will better be able to manifest your own inner Light.

Vajrasana

Vajrasana looks simpler than its dramatic effects reveal. It increases the digestive fire manyfold, tones the digestive tract and eliminates gas. Keeping the knees together, kneel on the floor. Point the toes, spread the heels and sit back on the feet. Keep head, neck and trunk in a straight line. Let the weight fall on the ankles; place the palms on the knees and relax.

At first you may not be able to hold the pose long because of tension in the knees or ankles, but gradually it will become comfortable. If possible, sit in this pose while eating and for at least ten minutes afterward. You will notice a great strengthening of the capacity of the digestive tract as well as toning of the entire nervous system.



Yoga in the Schools

by Ram Gary Rick

Many Yogic techniques can be used in school settings from pre-school through high school. Yoga seeks to direct the attention within, so that eventually the mind can be controlled. Anything that works toward these goals can be seen as Yoga. While formal education teaches children to use the mind in specific ways, inward direction and self-control are often overlooked by educators and teachers. Below are some methods which have been successfully used in a public school class for hyperactive 6th grade boys with social behavior problems. The methods can, of course, be adapted to various educational situations.

Mouna

Absolute silence (non-speaking) for a certain period of time helps develop inward direction by eliminating most of the unnecessary forms of external communication. Mouna can be introduced in a school by having a class play a structured game like volleyball in complete silence. Even the teacher can speak only to keep score or give necessary instructions. It is amazing to watch children who usually cannot play together peacefully for more than a few minutes play for over an hour in total silence. Groups and indi-

vidual children will actually ask for permission to go into silent periods as they learn the benefits of silence.

Initially it is probably wise to have pupils volunteer for silent activities or to apply widely used reinforcement systems. In a short time, however, silence can become its own reward.

Hatha Yoga

Despite the lack of proper facilities for Hatha Yoga, many asanas (postures) and pranayams (breathing practices) can still be taught in any classroom. The Sun Worship and several other asanas can be performed without actually lying down. Even Corpse Pose can be done while seated as a preparation for meditation. Slowly, any calisthenic or competitive attitude goes away, especially when asanas are done in silence. Surprisingly, many apparently healthy children have inflexible bodies and poor body awareness.

Meditation

Prior to actual meditation, forms of Pratyahara (sense control) and Dharana (concentration) can be practiced by children sitting quietly at their desks with eyes closed. The children can be asked to sit for some time letting the mind run on. When directed to



just observe the thoughts occurring in the mind, children, like adults, are amazed at what goes on there involuntarily. As the mind is observed, the thoughts are quieted down and some initial control is developed. This is part of Pratyahara, observation of the mind to develop freedom from the senses.

Next, Dharana--holding the mind to certain points in or out of the body--can be used. Especially in conjunction with health lessons, children can be directed to think of the heart beat, the flow of the breath, sounds heard within the ear, etc. They can also be directed to attend to sounds occurring outside the room, in the hallways, or to the birds, rustling trees, etc. After awhile they can choose their own object of concentration.

Karma Yoga

Work done as selfless service

to others is Karma Yoga. This too can be approximated in the schools. A pupil, for instance, who has learned to wash the windows in his classroom may be allowed to wash the windows in other classrooms. Older pupils can tutor younger ones. Certainly, the ego will be involved in such tasks. But encouraging children not to look for a thank you but to find joy in doing a good job can help.

Many opportunities for the application of Yogic techniques exist for schools and all life settings. And as children are allowed to develop self-control and awareness, there can be a smooth transition from the baby's unconscious identification with universal essence to the integrated personality and consciousness of adulthood.

Ram (Gary) Rick has a Masters degree in Psychology and has taught in Los Angeles for the past 6 yr



The Kingdom of God

by **Sudharshan
Anderson**

Sudharshan Anderson is a long-time devotee of Sri Swami Satchidananda. This article is based on a talk he gave at the Thanksgiving Yoga Retreat atitchfield, Ct. in November 1975.

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God. Then all these things will be added unto thee."--Jesus

This article is an experiment to see if I can make real this concept of the Kingdom of God. It is said that in science even negative results are fruitful, so perhaps even if the experiment fails we will learn something.

My hypothesis is that there are in the life and teachings of Swami Satchidananda two kinds of teachings. One, the outer teachings, are the teachings of Integral Yoga. The other, the inner teaching, I like to call the teaching of the Kingdom of God or the Gospel of Divine Life.

I want to relate this distinction to my experience with our beloved Swamiji and the Integral Yoga Institute.

Swamiji is a bit like a medicine man who carries with him a medicine bag--a bag of tricks. He has taught us many tricks

from his bag: the postures, the breathing techniques, the diet, the silence itself. Every spiritual teacher has his own bag of tricks, his own collection of remedies. However, if you listen to Swamiji long enough, you notice that he not infrequently disavows any real identification with these practices that he himself teaches. He refers to "your asanas and your japa," as if these did not capture the essence of what he himself is trying to present. I am suggesting, as Swamiji himself has pointed out, that these practices are not the essence--it cannot be spoken or taught as such, it has simply to be lived. It is that essence that Swamiji himself lives. That is the Divine Life, the living in the Kingdom of God. It is thus his life itself that is his inner teaching.

Stages on Life's Way

My own involvement with Integral Yoga has passed through various stages. I was first drawn to Swamiji by his presence and irresistible happiness and good humor. My whole life was deeply affected simply by the idea that it might be possible for me to be like him--a possibility of

joy and fulfillment I had never considered. So I went to him and asked, "What next?" He replied, "Get involved with the Institute, learn the practices and realize the benefit for yourself. Try it, you'll like it."

So I took up the practices--the bag of tricks--and for several years was very much involved with the Institute, the Matha, Raja, Japa, etc. Then along about 1973 I began to notice that the whole business was getting stale. To be quite frank, Integral Yoga became boring and the amateurism of the Institute painfully magnified. I met other teachers and spiritual groups and many seemed more interesting and certainly better organized. Many close friends left the IYI over the years and I was saddened to lose them.

Yet for some reason I stuck around, not really knowing why. I began to question, "What am I doing here--with this untogether organization, with these teachings I find dull?" Don't misunderstand me, I had benefited tremendously from the practices and from the opportunities for service the IYI provided, and yet the fascination had passed. "What am I doing here?" became my mantram.

Something Happens

Recently, without flashing lights, visions, or anything dramatic, things have been getting a bit clearer as to why I stuck around. It seems to involve what I call the inner teaching of Swamiji. Behind Swamiji as founder-director of the IYI--unspoken like the water we swim in as

fish, in the IYIs, the Ashram and the Integral Yoga community, there is something happening that I call the Kingdom of God.

It seems to happen without our notice. As opportunities arise we just serve unselfconsciously. This is especially clear on retreats where the staff members are so busy serving the practical demands of the retreatants that they lose themselves and begin to experience the simple joy of real selfless service. The joy I have seen among retreat staff members has been a real eye-opener. In the somewhat cloistered environment of the Institutes the consciousness of limitation sometimes seems to prevail, whereas on the retreats the Divine Life comes forward to be lived.

It is not that we consciously relate to God as some sort of external being. How could we? God is not an experience outside ourselves. This is where faith comes in. Faith is founded on intuition--we have to intuit the existence and reality of that higher power; not out there, but within our own beings as our very Selves. So we begin to simply live as that. We begin to serve, we become service. We become responsible; we begin to live in faith based on our intuitive perception.

A New Perspective

This faith became real to me after I had gotten tired of the "bag of tricks" and the ceaseless involvement with my own problems, to which I was always either applying or not applying the appropriate trick. I began

to inquire more deeply, almost with a sense of desperation. "Here I have been a 'Yogi' and leading what I thought was a 'spiritual life' and all of a sudden I am bored with it. How can that be?" But I can see now that that sort of fall was necessary. It was, seemingly, a fall into the Self. This is probably why they say enlightenment is so simple. There is really nothing to it and nothing to do that will bring it--it simply is. Just know that and be happy.

I had spent years struggling and searching, worrying and feeling miserable with myself. The simplicity of it escaped me since I was so dedicated to the complications of my own inadequacy. I had been constantly impoverishing myself by magnifying and dwelling upon all I thought I lacked. This seems to have been the essence of selfishness. This blocked me from enjoying the fullness I already was. So I began to suspect, "I can live that fullness now! There need be no more waiting!"

So the natural process seems to be that we get involved with all these practices, trying to escape our problems, trying to apply solutions, until the futility of that approach becomes obvious. Then we begin to inquire more deeply and awaken to a new perspective. What I want to suggest is that it's really a very simple thing to move into the Kingdom of God. It's God's gift to us, given freely as our birthright, given as unearned grace as our very Selves. All we have to do is accept it and begin to live that. It isn't a compli-

cated business at all--all the complications are creations of our minds which are external to our consciousness itself.

Responsibility

An important thing about the Kingdom of God is that it seems to bring a completely new perspective on the nature of responsibility. From the viewpoint of the bag of tricks--the struggle for enlightenment--responsibilities are a burden, more trials and tribulations taken on with an attitude of grim resignation. From the viewpoint of the Divine Life, however, responsibility has a totally different quality. It becomes a spontaneous expression of love and service, a joyful and natural gesture. It becomes a vehicle through which to share the joyful discovery of the Kingdom. That sense of discovery cannot be contained, it lives in being shared and responsibility is its natural expression.

The Divine Life is what we all long to lead. It is in sharing that life that we find real joy. That is why it is such a joy to be here with you all. In a way this retreat is the biggest trick. Perhaps as you become involved, you won't be looking when this new quality sneaks in, this new sort of vibration that I think is here to be lived and enjoyed. It is Swamiji's inner teaching as Guru: the Divine Life, the Kingdom of God.

Thank you so much.

Om Shanthi Shanthi Shanthi.

The Ego



by **Swami Sivananda**

The workings of the ego are very mysterious. It needs a subtle and sharp intellect and keen introspection to find out its operations.

Wherever there is ego, there is selfishness, likes and dislikes, arrogance, conceit, cravings, hypocrisy and the idea of agency and doership. You must have a very clear understanding if you wish to annihilate the ego. Only patient and sustained effort can give you success.

This ego likes its own birth-place, its mother tongue, its own relations and friends, its own ways of eating, mode of dressing and similar things. It has its own preferences. It dislikes others' ways of eating, dressing, etc.

This ego wants to exercise power and influence over others. It wants titles, prestige, respect, prosperity. If anybody points out its defects, its vanity is offended. If anybody praises it, it is elated. These are the modifications of the ego.

This ego will lurk like a thief when you start introspection. It will elude your under-

standing. You must be ever alert. Practice introspection daily and discriminate. Try to know the ways and habits of this ego. It thirsts for self-aggrandizement or self-advancement. Be disinterested. Pin your faith on the opposite virtues, in the spirit of sacrifice and service. At once you will have an expanded spiritual life.

Kindle the powers of resistance. Keep up the ideal of active service to humanity and pure love. Overcome negative thoughts by entertaining positive divine thoughts. Rise from impurity, impotence and faintness of heart. Be bold, be cheerful always.

Obtain the grace of the Lord through meditation, chanting, prayer and devotion. Through the Lord's grace alone will your surrender become perfect. When this ego melts in the Cosmic Ego, you will have communion with the Lord through Self-realization.

Sri Swami Sivananda, Swamiji's Guru, was founder of the Divine Life Society and dedicated to the service of humanity. He left the physical body in 1963.

THE MOTHER IS THE BABY'S FIRST GURU

Pregnancy, Infant Care, and Yoga

Excerpted from Swami Satchidananda's introduction to The Mother is the Baby's First Guru edited by Shree Hassin, a proposed new 60 pg. booklet including his answers to questions plus pregnancy asanas.

In Tamil, the language of South India, there is a proverb which says, "What is learned in the cradle goes to the cremation ground." Because the brain of a child is so new, its first impressions are well defined. They are not easy to erase. It's like writing on wet concrete; you can't erase it easily. Just write anything, it holds. As it grows, it gets harder.

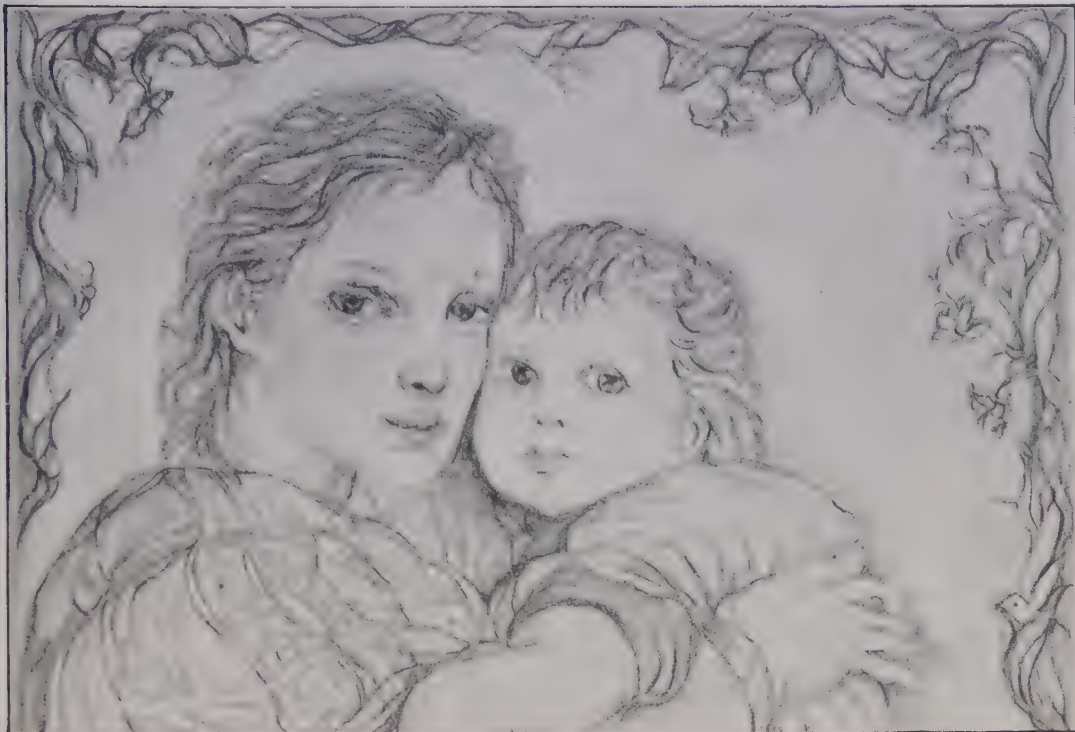
The mother is everyone's first guru or teacher. That is where a child gets its morality. Mothers are aspects of Prakriti, the Goddess Shakti. It is their job to maintain dharma--morality and virtue. The scriptures say the Universe itself is the feminine aspect of God, or the Mother. So mothers should have the patience of the Earth itself, because they are part of the Earth, part of Nature.

From the day of conception, a mother has the responsibility of protecting and educating her child. The father's job is only to pass the soul into the mother's womb. There the mother provides all the materials for it to build itself a house, both a physical body and new impressions to add to the character. Even from the first day of con-

ception, a mother can mold her child as she wants.

In India, mothers are pampered during their pregnancy. A happy environment is created to avoid any shocks or mental disturbances. Pregnant mothers are encouraged to read only Scriptures, holy books and lives of heroes. If she wants a saintly baby, she'll fill her room with photographs of saints and read their biographies, rather than reading crime novels and watching sensational movies.

If you really want to be a mother, qualify yourself to bring forth a new life into the world. A child isn't a plaything; so until you become fit, it's better not to have one. Today there are a lot of psychological problems in the minds of children because of their parents. Many children are love-starved. They seldom learn the proper things at home. Taking care of a child's mind is even more important than taking care of its body. If an organ goes amiss, you might be able to transplant another in its place, but you can't transplant the mind. And the mind is built up first by the mother. She can make or break it.



A P P E A L

This book and the others described below are awaiting printing. However, at this time we lack the needed resources to do so. We would like to suggest a practice long traditional in India of inviting a Teacher's disciples and friends to come forward with the financial support for the printing of his teachings. Swami Sivananda called it "Jnana Yajna" or the Wisdom Sacrifice. In this case we make a monetary "sacrifice" so that thousands can share in Gurudev's wisdom through the printed word. We request all who share this interest help by sponsoring a book or part of one. Donations of any amount would be a great service. Here are some of the books awaiting publication:

- THE MOTHER IS THE BABY'S FIRST GURU: 60 pgs. 24 photos, 2-color cover, 7x10" size, 3000 copies.....Cost:\$3200.
- THE LIVING GITA: Our first bound book of Gurudev's teachings, his commentaries on the Bhagavad Gita. 150 pgs, 10 photos, 2-color cover, 5x7", bound, 3000 copies.....\$4400.
- TRAVELLING DARSHAN: Photographic booklet of Gurudev's '76 India-Ceylon Tour with excerpts from his teachings as captions. 32 pgs, 60 photos, bl.& wh. cover, 5x7", 2000 copies.....\$1300.

All donors will receive complementary copies and be appropriately acknowledged.

Please make checks payable to: Satchidananda Ashram and mail to: Wisdom Offering, IV Publications, Box 108, Pomfret Ctr. Ct. 06259

(cont'd)

Letters

The following two letters are about Yoga and children. They clearly show that the Kingdom of God is with the children.

Dear Papa,

Though Mark is only 3 years old, he is a constant reminder to me of what selfless love and pure devotion are all about. Every day he serves you lunch and keeps your picture clean. He even sleeps with your picture.

His faith in God and Yoga is steadfast. When he asked me about death recently, I told him about the body getting tired and worn out as you have taught us. I didn't know how well he understood until a few days later when I heard him discussing death with a 4 year old friend.

Friend: "Mark, you know what? You're going to die some day and then you'll be gone forever!"

Mark: "No, Ross, you will never die, only your *body* dies."

Ross: "Mark, you're only 3. You don't know anything. When you're gone, you're gone; that's all."

Mark (again very calmly, playing with a toy): "Ross, you're wrong. Only the body dies, not you. You don't understand."

Mark had understood and applied every word I had told him. Swamiji, I learn constantly from his here-and-now attitude and thank God for allowing me to have the opportunity to care for such a beautiful soul.

We love you Papa.

R. and M. W.
Columbia, Mo.

Dear Family,

The other day Madhavan insisted that I tell him which meal prayer is the "right" one; he's discovered there are many prayers. I said all were good but most important was the sincerity of the offering and the gratefulness in receiving. He at once grew worried. "Sometimes I don't think any good stuff at all. I just say it."

Next day as he was about to pour some milk, he closed his eyes and holding the carton over his head, prayed, "Dear dear cows, oh how I thank you for the milk you so nicely give, such good cows." He started to pour, then stopped suddenly and raised the carton aloft again, "And dear little goats, thank you too."

OM OM OM

Devi

Goleta, Calif.

The following letter is from behind prison walls, but indicates the Yogic freedom is being found there too.

Namaste,

For over a year I have been regularly practicing Integral Yoga in this penitentiary as set down by Swamiji in the book of the same name. What can I say! It's TRUE. You got to go through what you got to go through but here-now is where I prefer to be.

Om Shanthi

Baba

Steilacoom, Wash.

News of Swamiji



- VISIT TO HONG KONG
- INDIA AND SRI LANKA
(CEYLON) PILGRIMAGE

This past December, before leaving for India, Gurudev gave sat-sang (gathering with disciples) at the Connecticut Ashram. He had just returned from a visit to Hong Kong and to some of the IYI centers in the U.S. Here is a dramatic account of the trip in his own words.

Yes, I've been travelling for the past month. First I flew to Santa Barbara for a few days rest, then to Los Angeles for a lecture and then left the very next day for Hong Kong. It was that trip which really taught a beautiful lesson to many people.

I was especially invited to Hong Kong to join a few other dignitaries in cutting the ribbon for a new Holiday Inn Hotel (see inside back cover). Imagine a swami doing that! That itself shows how Yoga and swamis can get into everything.

Many of you know the Harilela family. They recently started a new venture--a huge 650 room hotel and somehow they thought of me to come bless the opening. Of course they also invited the chairman of the Holiday Inns, Mr. Kemmons Wilson and he had the idea to invite the Rev. Billy Graham who happened to be in Hong Kong at the time. And of course, many hundreds of other people from all parts of the world also came.

The guests arrived on the 10th and the next night was a grand welcome dinner party. As usual, all the guests went to greet the Harilela's mother also because she is the presiding deity of the whole family.

At this point I should ex-

plain how the Indian joint family functions. Though living in Hong Kong, the Harilelas live like a traditional Indian family. All the six brothers are married with children, some of whom also have children. They all live in one huge mansion. In one part of the house is a large shrine room. Every morning the women each take care of one altar, all performing the services at the same time. They clean away yesterday's flowers, bathe the deities, burn incense, put new flowers and sandalpaste, etc. and then offer the *prasad* (consecrated food). By the time they finish, the men will be ready for the office, but before they go, they also come and take part in the final *arathi* (waving of the lights which ends every Hindu service).

Then they will all go to the mother's apartment and one by one bow down at her feet, then give a hug and kiss. (See the combination of reverence and love?) They will ask how she is and then, with her blessings, leave for work. And even when they arrive at their shopping centers, before entering the office, they bow down at the threshold and offer a prayer. They treat the whole place as God's.

So, because of that, whoever comes, whether governor, president, swami or whoever, they will always move freely with the whole family and also pay their respects to the mother. Everyone who knows the family, knows the mother also. So that evening of the 11th, the guests went to greet the mother. She talked to them for awhile but wasn't well. We all said goodnight and went

four hotels to get ready for the next day's gala opening. But somehow they didn't want me to be there but insisted I stay in their house as usual.

Around 7:15 the next morning, I was almost ready to come out of my room, the elder brother's wife knocked at my door. "Ammi (as they call the mother) not well; please come." We went quickly and there she was, almost in a coma. We said a prayer and I felt her pulse sink. She looked at us, closed her eyes and passed away.

It was 7:30 a.m. Remember, 12 o'clock is the gala opening for which the entire world has gathered. They had even made her a social throne. This was their biggest venture yet, having put so many millions of dollars. I imagine the situation--their mother, whom they revered so much, who was expected to bless the entire ceremony, passes away a few hours before. Thank God, because of their strong religious belief, they were able to accept that great shock. But they really didn't know what to do. Some thought, "cancel everything. We will do another day." But a few said, "there are almost 1500 people gathered from all over the globe. We should not disappoint them. It won't be easy to get them back again. We should continue." They finally decided to have the opening but without the family members and I had to represent them in most of the functions. My position was quite embarrassing. Can you imagine a mother opening a hotel? But of course everything went well. At

12 noon the opening was done. Afterwards I invited Rev. Graham to come say a prayer for Ammi which he kindly did and the following day the cremation was done.

It was a big, big lesson for many people. In life, we see great pleasure and terrible pain side by side. On that day, I could very well see the entire Nature's function. All the relatives and friends gathered there were really shocked. It was a lesson for everybody. They had to accept it as God's will.

BACK IN THE STATES

On the 18th, I left Hong Kong for L.A., then went to Dallas where they are also planning for a Satchidananda Ashram. They had arranged lectures in Dallas, San Antonio and Austin plus radio and television programs. It was a sort of heavy 10-day program, but everything went well and there was a lot of enthusiasm.

Next, I went to Denver for two days, then spent three in Chicago. A lecture was arranged by Diane Clausen at the Sheraton Hotel. It was really very well arranged and publicised with the help of Sri Ram and Sita. They expected about 250 people but had to keep ordering more and more chairs 'till there were 500. It was really a beautiful big crowd, from babies to grandpas--everybody was there.

In December, 35 of Gurudev's students accompanied him to India and Ceylon. It was an amazing and inspiring journey as it was the first opportunity for most of us to be in his presence daily.

Like Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita, we had often wondered, "How does a realized being act, sit, talk and move in the world?" Here was our chance to find out. Our past issues have given day-by-day accounts of places and people in Gurudev's travels; but now we wish to sacrifice some of those details to share more of the glory, beauty, humor and even the pain of being close to that living flame of Truth which is the Guru.

BOMBAY - December 12

We landed in Bombay with the dawn, tired but excited. Some touched the ground in reverence--a long-held dream was being fulfilled! Gurudev was immediately informed of the sudden death of the husband of his oldest disciple Sohini Mehta. He saw us safely onto our bus to the hotel, and though it was now 5 a.m. after almost 24 hours of sleepless travel, he hurried to Sohini's home. Her grief and Gurudev's simultaneous arrival overwhelmed her as she clasped his feet sobbing. In Gurudev's silent embrace was the unspoken acknowledgement that her unending faith in Gurudev had brought her the blessing of his physical presence in her time of need.

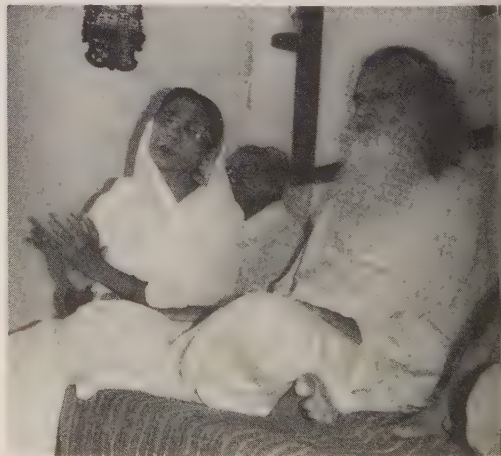
Just moments later he was scolding her for letting her mind engulf her instead of relying on the deathless Truth which she knew. It was truly inspiring to see her respond to his words, as through her grief shone a great strength born of devotion. By the third day, she broke all prevalent cultural rules for a

new widow by leading us all in a glorious chant in praise of the guru, lifting herself and present far above the realms of loss and sorrow.

Dec. 15. This morning Gurudev spoke at Bombay's National College on "Discipline in Education." "We never stop learning," he said. "To learn we must tune in which requires discipline throughout life. Only then can we achieve true freedom." Gurudev explained that the real purpose of education is "not to amass wealth or sell what you learn, but to serve others." During the talk, the bell rang for the next class and a large group of students made a rather noisy exit for which the principal apologized. But Gurudev wasn't the least bit ruffled; instead he used it to illustrate what he was saying about freedom--that one man's freedom should not disturb others.

MADRAS - Dec. 15

Landing in Madras, we were



Gurudev with Sohini Mehta



Gurudev and the pilgrims

ed by a large group including
N. Mahalingam, a well known,
spiritually minded industrialist
and Madras Chief Justice Kailasam,
with long time friends of Guru-
dev. What a thrill to see the
open love and devotion in their
bees and perfumed garlands by
be armfuls. Through the sultry
light air, distant palm trees,
bright saris and officials in
dhoti shorts, we could sense
that we were to experience
throughout the journey--these
people's unique relationship
with one in whom they feel the
presence of God; whose feet they
touch in honest humility and who
inspires joy in them without the
least taint of fear or tension.
For them it seems the most natur-
al thing to find God in this
form. Those of us brought up in
Western religious traditions
found this a continuing impetus
to let go of old ideas and open
our hearts.

Dec. 16. This evening--our first
temple: Mylapore, dedicated to
Lord Siva. No one knew what to
expect! It was so new, fascinating

and fast-moving, all we could do
was keep up with Gurudev. All
our expectations were undermined.
Instead of peace and quiet, there
were crowds, commotion and loud
temple music over loudspeakers.
The deities were totally differ-
ent from anything which would
call to our minds a church or
temple. Our Western minds were
literally forced to let go of
conditioned expectations and sim-
ply experience.

It was a new and moving exper-
ience also, to see Gurudev bow
his head humbly to the deities,
obviously experiencing the living
presence of God through these
forms. Though not completely un-
derstanding, some of us were
moved to tears.

With our heads spinning, we
were directed to the inner court-
yard where people had gathered
to hear Gurudev speak. He looked
the very picture of the Yogic
sage discoursing in the temple--
the wind catching his flowing
hair and clothing as his sooth-
ing words of wisdom flowed out
in his beloved native Tamil
over the intently listening crowd.

As usual in Gurudev's Indian trips, we stayed at the Queen's hotel.

COIMBATORE - Dec. 17

The week spent here was one of the most exciting, inspiring and fun for us. Visiting Gurudev's birthplace, we experienced the love and devotion of these souls who have known him since childhood. How would he treat them? Would he show any difference? But we saw only equipoise and all-encompassing equal love for all. We felt like one family. As Gurudev introduced them, we felt overwhelmed by the personal sacrifice which had given Gurudev to so many thousands all over the globe.

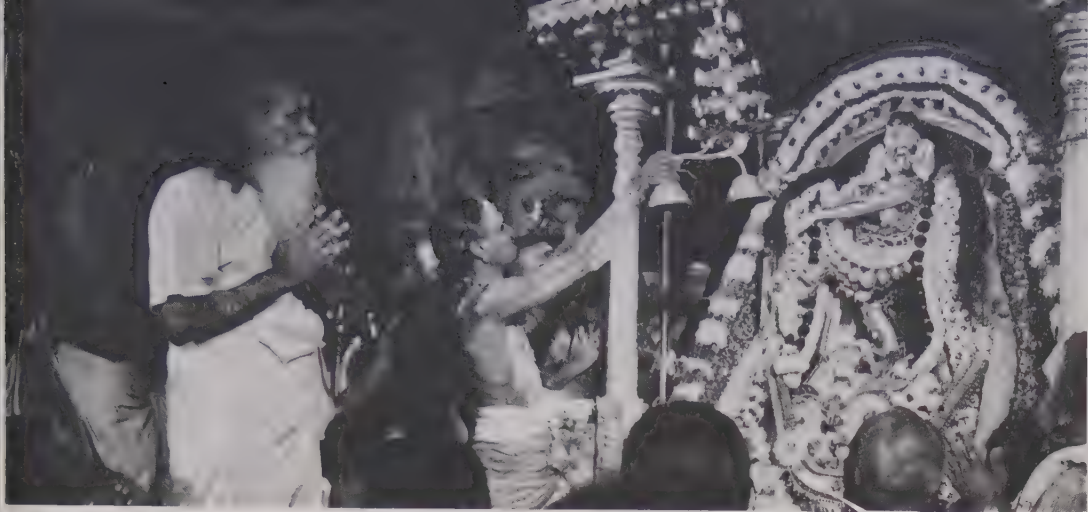
18th morning we were greeted at the Ramakrishna Mission school by Mr. Avinashilingam, a long-time associate of Gurudev's. As has become our practice, our group offered a guru *sloka* (a Sanskrit prayer) and a Tamil song, to the delight of several hundred boys who attend the school. They listened with rapt attention as Gurudev spoke, after which Swamis Amritananda Ma and Vidyananda Ma spoke, Vidyananda--to their surprise--offering a short talk in Tamil.

After the satsang we toured the school's workshops where, as in the other Ramakrishna institutions we visited, we saw the great saint Ramakrishna's teachings put into practice. In clean, quiet, well-ordered workshops these dedicated people were learning to serve God and humanity. It seems that this is his and our own beloved Gurudev's real mes-

sage: it doesn't matter what name you give to God, what rituals you perform, what language you speak--but do you serve the humanity with perfection in action?

Dec. 19. By this time, the rigors of constant travel were catching up with many of us and some were sick. But no one wanted to miss the Siva Festival at the Perur Pateeswara temple. We left the hotel at 2 a.m., yet found hundreds already assembled in the temple when we arrived. During the long hours of the *puja* (service), we watched in awe as the priests bathed Nataraja (Siva) and His consort Sivakami in the ritual *abhishekam* (pouring of milk, honey, curd, coconut water, sandalpaste, holy ash, etc.). In between, arati was performed and several times the deities were decorated in different robes, enrapturing the throngs with their beauty as the curtains were pulled aside. All this was accompanied by the ardent concentration of the devotees and the triumphant music of the temple musicians with pipes, drums and bells.

We had the special honor of sitting close to the deities while Gurudev sat directly in front of the Lord Nataraja. At one point, he received a special blessing when a lime from the hand of Nataraja--offered during part of the *puja*--rolled first to the base of the deity and then directly into his lap. The look of bliss on Gurudev's face during the *puja* was an experience never to be forgotten by any of us.



Worship of Lord Nataraj at Perur Temple

When the deities were finally addressed, garlanded and fully bedecked with jewels, the crowd, now numbering in the thousands, began to push forward toward the deities. Looking like God himself, Gurudev stood facing the crowd with folded palms. A moment later, they were completely transformed, standing prayerfully, hands folded and looking stunned. But they were soon surging forward again. Now Gurudev, like a lion, with upraised arms, forced them back by the sheer force of his presence. Then a moment later he was guiding us to the safety of a nearby roof to watch the procession. Emerging from the temple, he looked so exhilarated--the natural culmination of his love for the Highest Cosmic Force.

Dec. 22. Gurudev's jayanthi (birthday)! It is also the Samadhi Day (day when a saint left his body) of Sri Ramananda Swamikal, founder of Kowmara Madam. In a way, he was Gurudev's first guru. Sri Sundara Swamigal who now heads the madam (ashram) and Sri Santalinga Swamigal invited

us to join them for a combined celebration. There was a lengthy puja to the great saint, followed by literally hours of tributes and multitudes of garlands which Gurudev would gently remove and place on the necks of the other swamis and devotees.

Several weeks later we heard they had named a new hall in Gurudev's honor.

PALANI - Dec. 24

We arrived by bus around noon to find Mr. and Mrs. Kalidas waiting to take us to their home, where years ago Gurudev spent time in seclusion. His hut is now their shrine room around which they built their home.

We then proceeded to the Hill, at the top of which stands the famous temple to Lord Muruga--worshipped here as a sannyasi. The statue of the deity is made of 9 chemicals, poisonous alone but somehow curative in combination. Devotees come from all over to receive the abhishekam prasada from the pujas--saturated with the grace and curative properties of the image. After a spe-



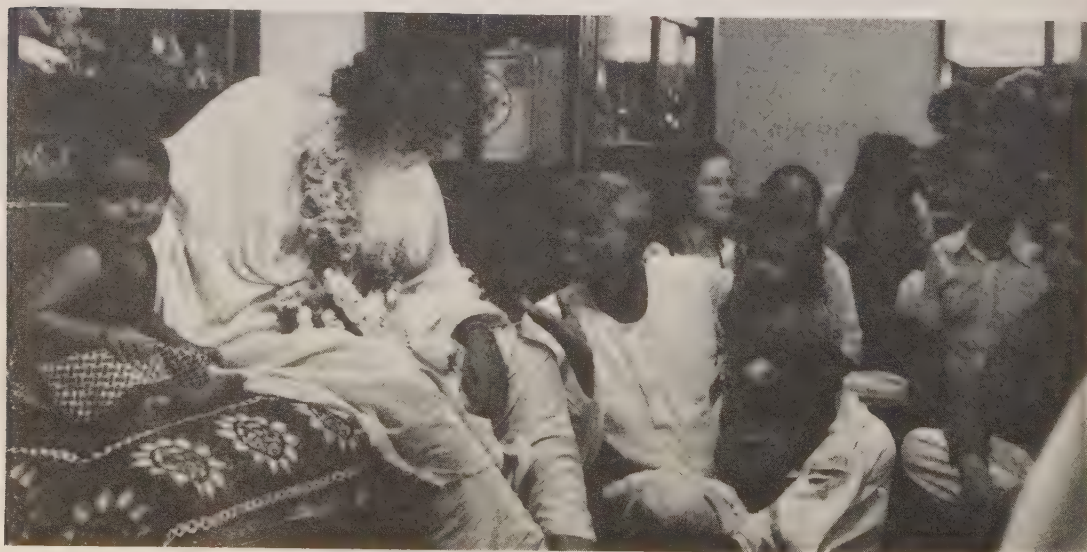
Sri Sundara Swamigal, Santalinga Swamigal and Gurudev

cial puja and taking the prasad, we participated in a huge procession around the temple. The devotees walk in front of the deity, gazing back over their shoulders to catch a glimpse of the beautiful image of the Lord riding His golden car through the night. We felt intoxicated with the presence of Muruga. "Vel Muruga!" (Hail to that Lord whose spear--vel--pierces our delusion!)

MADURAI - Dec. 25

In the early morning we were

instructed to get ready to visit the Madurai Meenakshi temple for the Goddess's *darshan* (vision). This is one of the most famous and certainly most elaborate and ancient of Indian temples. Arriving at the inner sanctum, the priests flatly refused us entrance because we weren't Hindus. Gurudev directed us to a corner where he led soft but heartfelt chanting to the Divine Mother, saying we would have Her *darshan*. As we stood up, the same priests, with tears in their eyes, directed us to the inner sanctum.



Gurudev with Mr. Kalidas and his children

THIRICHURAPALLI - Dec. 27

Some of us were ill and Gurudev asked us this morning how a certain girl was feeling. No one had taken it upon themselves to look after her--except Gurudev. She got the treat of his visit to her room and we all had the opportunity to see our own selfishness and lack of real caring. That night, our diaries were filled with such thoughts as these from Amritananda: "I'm realizing that spiritual practice is learning to love everyone--to be sweet and caring always; to meditate on what we do and to find ways to serve."

Dec. 28. On our way to the airport to leave for Sri Lanka, we visited Ramakrishna Thapovanam on the outskirts of Trichy and were blessed to meet His Holiness Sri Swami Chidbhavananda, who gave Gurudev pre-Sannyas initiation years before. "If I am your Papa," Gurudev said, "then he is your Grandpa." As the swami entered the room, we could feel the tremendous love and energy and watched with wonder, the love and devotion which Gurudev radiated in his presence.

JAFFNA, SRI LANKA (CEYLON)

We were met at the Jaffna airport by a large group of devotees led by Sri Kanagaratnam. The vibrant intensity of their "Satchidananda Guru" chanting let us immediately feel their devotion to him.

We enjoyed our first string-hoppers (typical noodle pancake found only in Sri Lanka) at Mrs.

Soorasangaran's home. Later the Divine Life Society gave a public reception and Miss Rajalakshmi honored Gurudev's jayanthi with original songs and stories based on his life.

TRINCOMALEE, SRI LANKA - Dec. 30

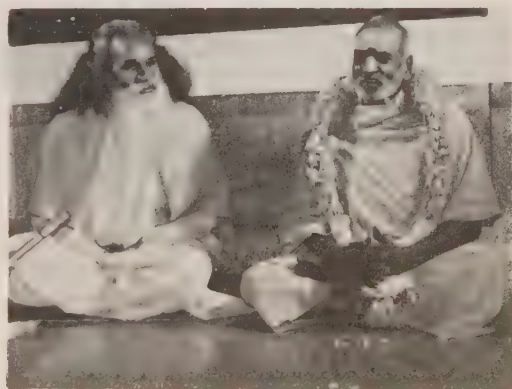
During our short visit to this harbor city, we enjoyed meeting many of Gurudev's oldest devotees here where he had begun his fifteen years of service to Sri Lanka.

KANDY, SRI LANKA - Jan. 3

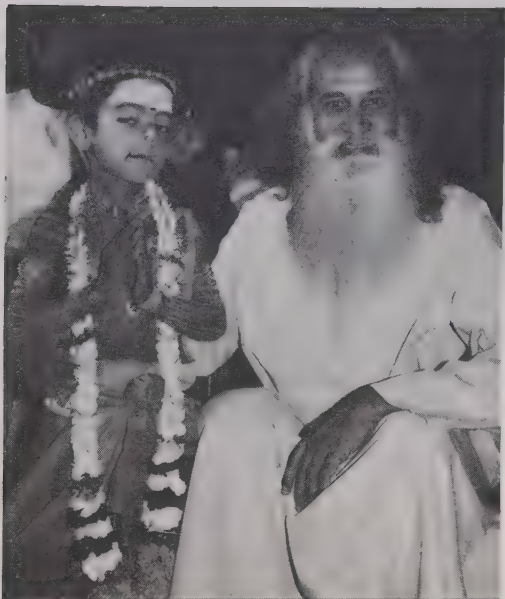
How glad we were to visit Satchidananda Thapovanam (ashram) and be with Mataji, the Rasiahs, Shanmugam and all the other great souls there. In the morning we sang and chanted and spoke with all who had gathered to greet Gurudev.

NEWARA ELIYA - Jan. 5

Arriving after a beautiful mountainous ride through miles of Sri Lankan tea plantations, we were introduced to Mayor W.T.



Gurudev and Sri Swami
Chidbhavananda



At Divine Life Society, Jaffna

Fernando. "Shanthipuram," his vision of a community where people of all religions live harmoniously together is so close to Gurudev's own ideals for Yogaville. Mr. Fernando was eager to hear Gurudev's advice and took us to the mountaintop site of a future universal meditation center.

COLOMBO - Jan. 9

Today we visited the headquarters of Sarvodaya, a community based on the teachings of Vinobha Bhave, chief disciple of Mahatma Gandhi. 300 people live in this compound, learning and working at various cottage industries and serving the villagers throughout Sri Lanka with feeding stations, building projects, schools, etc. They are full of optimism, dynamism and spirit of service. The founder, Mr. A. T. Ariyaratne, who studied with Gurudev, is a beautiful being who, like Gurudev,

teaches selfless service, self-discipline and cooperation among all peoples. We were re-inspired to return to the states to serve and live together with that same spirit.

Jan. 10. We flew back to India today, happy to be in "Mother's arms" again. It is impossible to describe to one who has not been there, that feeling of security and joy we felt as we again touched her soil. Our destination tonight: Cape Comerin, southernmost tip of India. On the way, we stopped at Abedananda Ashram, where Gurudev and Swami Abedananda met for the 1st time. The atmosphere of this ashram was an inspiration of a different sort: here *akhanda japa* (continuous chanting of a particular name of God) has been conducted for over 20 years. One can feel the purifying vibrations permeating the entire ashram. Here was a living demonstration of the power of mantra repetition, the power of God's name--such a simple practice, yet with unmistakable transforming results.

MADRAS - Jan. 12

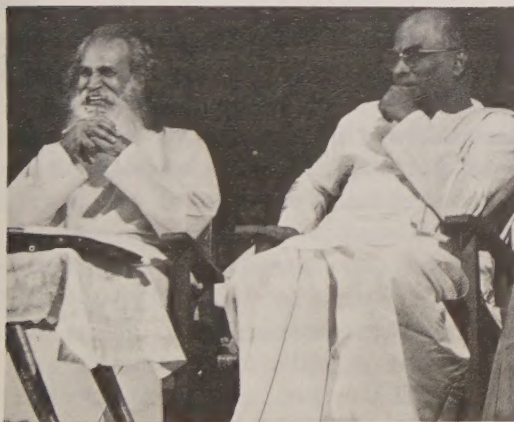
Back in Madras, Gurudev spoke at Ethiraj College for women--hundreds of beautiful Indian girls, each in a different colored sari--nowhere in America could one see such a colorful audience! In his talk, he urged them to keep alive the ideals of Hinduism, warning of the spiritual lack in Western society that has caused the high suicide rates, need for psychiatric care and wide drug abuse.

PONDICHERRY - Jan. 15

Home of Sri Aurobindo Ashram and Auroville--another incredible experience! Here, dominating the small town of Pondicherry, is an 1800 member spiritual community dedicated to Sri Aurobindo's teachings. Living together, forging a new society and ultimately a new humanity is their ideal. Gurudev met with Mr. Navajata, current head of the Ashram and then sent us on a tour of it, reminding us to keep our eyes and ears open to learn how a spiritual community can function. We visited their batik factory, weaving studio, paper-making and printing workshops, school and new community of Auroville--eventually to be an entire city based on the same principles. In the room where Aurobindo and the Mother stayed, we felt the intense vibrations of their presence which likewise permeates this entire town.

VADALUR - Jan. 17

Here stands the temple Guru-



Gurudev and Mr. Mahalingam
at Ethiraj College

dev has often told us about, where Light is the presiding deity. The temple was constructed by St. Ramalinga Swamigal in the last century, for whom the light was the universal religious symbol which could bring all religions together. The feeding of hundreds of the poor was instituted here by the saint and continues to this day.

Mr. Mahalingam, President of the All-India Ramalinga Mission, had arranged everything for this part of our journey and was able to join us here.

NORTH INDIA - Jan. 19

We flew to Delhi yesterday. North India is so different from the south which is almost untouched by Western influences.

Tonight we had the rare privilege of the darshan of the lady saint, Ananda Mayi Ma. It is said she rarely lets anyone garland her, instead taking the garlands in her hand and putting them immediately on the devotee's neck as prasad. But apparently her relationship with Gurudev is different--we watched as he lovingly garlanded her and their eyes met for a few moments of silent yet so eloquent communion while we and her devotees milled around and chanted. As she left, she turned and called, "Baba, Baba" (holy father) and wouldn't go until she had filled his arms with fruit.

Jan. 20. Tonight we gathered at the home of the Divine Life Society's president, Mr. Mukunda Lalji. Looking at a huge photo of Sri Swami Sivananda, Gurudev

said, "It's too bad you can't see him." We answered, "But we are seeing him--in you." He shook his head and humbly said, "Oh no, he is the banana; I'm just the peel." Again, his overwhelming humility softened our egos and brought tears to many eyes.

Jan. 21. We left early for Haridwar, spending an enchanting overnight stay at Sri Swami Ganeshananda's ashram. Haridwar amazed us--a town full of ashrams! We walked along the banks of the Ganges at sunset and while loud-speakers sounded "Glory to the Lord of the World," we lit and set afloat tiny boats made of leaves, flowers and ghee wicks, sending them into Mother Ganges' bosom with our fervent prayers for purity and liberation.

RISHIKESH - Jan. 22

For many this was the trip's climax--Rishikesh--Gurudev's spiritual home and age-old home of sadhus and sannyasins. We arrived at Sivanandashram in time to take part in their weekly puja to Sri Swami Sivananda Samadhi Shrine. Many of us had tear-filled eyes as our Gurudev did puja to his own beloved guru.

Before lunch, we dipped in the Ganges, right in front of Ananda Kutir where Swami Sivananda had lived. The water was like ice but made us feel truly reborn. Gurudev explained that a polluted object placed for $\frac{1}{2}$ hour in the river would emerge totally clean. Later we visited the Kutir which was just as it

was when Sri Swami Sivananda left his body. You could really feel his vibration--not only in the kutir but throughout the ashram.

At the evening satsang with Sri Swami Krishnananda and other senior swamis, Swami Krishnananda gave a special talk. On our other evening in Rishikesh, Gurudev spoke about the sincerity of the Western students toward applying Yoga in their daily lives. Swami Satyananda Ma of the Dallas IYI told of the great Yoga work in the prisons of America, and Swami Jnanananda Ma of Yogaville told how Gurudev has saved so many young people like herself from a life of drugs and despondency.

Jan. 23. This morning we drove to Vasistha Cave, where Gurudev had often meditated. After an intense meditation in the cave, he gave mantra and pre-sannyas initiations on the Ganges bank. Few have the destiny even to come to such an auspicious place, Gurudev told us.

Jan. 24. Our last day in India--a blessed culmination to our pilgrimage. Before driving back to Delhi, we climbed $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles up into the Himalayas to the Kunjapuri shrine, literally following in Gurudev's footsteps. It was soon apparent he had more energy than anyone else. We managed to keep up, but many were huffing and puffing. Gurudev quietly reminded us to breathe through the nose and repeat our mantras.

At the summit was a small shrine which we had to stoop to enter. We meditated there in the most perfect silence imaginable. We then went outside and meditated



Swamis Madhavananda, Premananda, Gurudev and Sankarananda

ed atop this holy mountain where
in all directions lay the sacred
Himalayas.

Then Gurudev spoke very soft-
ly for a few minutes, telling us
"I am everywhere. By serving
everyone, you serve me." He then
took off down the mountain in a
run, some 35 disciples trailing
behind.

Leaving Gurudev at the Delhi
airport, we boarded the jet for
N.Y. Though sad to part physi-
cally, somehow his vibration
never left us; we felt him with
us all the way.

Returning, some to the Ash-
ram, others to the IYIs and
still others to homes and fam-
ilies, we were charged by the
powerful people and places we'd
seen and experienced. We learned
a lot and now return to meet the
challenge Gurudev presents: to
create a life here in America
filled with physical health,
mental peace and joyous self-
less service and sacrifice--
taking the best of the East--

the devotion and spiritual in-
sight, and the best of the West--
the energy, initiative and mat-
erial prosperity--to forge the
synthesis of which Gurudev
speaks, a truly Integral Union
(Yoga).

Gurudev stayed 3 more weeks in
India to attend the rededication
of the Perur Temple. He was the
guest of Mrs. Kumudini Devi in
Hyderabad with Sri Swami Venkates-
ananda. He was warmly received
on Mt. Abu by Didiji, Dadaji and
the Brahma Kumaris. Returning
to the U.S., he spent the win-
ter in California with addition-
al programs in Vancouver, Ha-
waii and Maui. He returned with
the spring to the Ashram where
he's been mainly keeping "out
of sight,"--encouraging us to
function without his constant
intercession--yet never "out
of mind" or heart.

*JAI GURUDEV! (Victory to the
Light we see in the Guru!)*

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